

## **LEGAL**

### **Statement of Purpose**

To provide quality legal counseling and representation to the Board of Commissioners, managers, and employees of Catawba County on all issues related to County government. Having an in-house legal team provides County departments quick access to legal services at a much lower cost for taxpayers. The legal team is committed to excellence, ethics, professionalism, and fairness in all matters.

### **Outcomes**

1. Provide needed legal services to all County departments as issues arise in a timely, professional and ethical manner by:
  - a. Completing preparation or review of contracts within five working days of receipt at least 95% of the time.
  - b. Achieving an approval rating of 95% on an annual client satisfaction survey.
2. Proactively improve County staff's ability to handle situations that could potentially have a legal impact on the County by:
  - a. Offering in-service training to any department but particularly EMS, Sheriff's Office, and Supervisors.
  - b. Providing all Public Safety employees with 24 hours per day, 7 days per week telephone access to an attorney.
3. Ensure that Board of Commissioners, Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, and Subdivision Review Board are able to address any legal issue whether arising during a meeting or anticipated in advance by assigning an attorney to both work with each respective board and be in attendance at each board meeting.
4. Maximize the collection of delinquent accounts, back taxes, and other monies owed to the County through active legal pursuit of collection. Success will be measured by an achievement of a 50% collection rate.

# Legal Services

## Reinventing Department

Organization: 120100

	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Current	2009/10 Requested	2009/10 Approved	Percent Change
<b>Revenue</b>					
Federal & State	\$1,972	\$0	\$1,200	\$0	0%
Miscellaneous	2,383	0	0	0	0%
Indirect Cost	0	50,000	42,182	42,182	-16%
General Fund	261,102	286,615	305,036	306,236	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$265,457</b>	<b>\$336,615</b>	<b>\$348,418</b>	<b>\$348,418</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Personal Services	\$253,527	\$312,345	\$322,254	\$322,254	3%
Supplies & Operations	11,930	24,270	26,164	26,164	8%
Capital	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$265,457</b>	<b>\$336,615</b>	<b>\$348,418</b>	<b>\$348,418</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Employees</b>					
Permanent	3.00	3.50	3.50	3.50	0%
Hourly	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>0%</b>

### Fiscal Year 2007/08 Outcome Achievements

Total Outcomes	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved	Success Rate
4	4	0	0	100%

## Budget Highlights

In Fiscal Year 2008/09, a half-time attorney position was added to the department primarily to help with legal issues associated with the new jail and the Sheriff's Department. Indirect cost revenues were used to fund this position. The budget continues this position.

## Performance Measurement

### Fiscal Year 2009/10

As in previous years, the Legal staff will focus on providing in-service training, continuous access to an attorney for all Public Safety employees, and maximization of delinquent accounts, back taxes, and other monies owed to the County through active legal pursuit of collection.

### Fiscal Year 2008/09

The Legal staff is on track to meet or exceed all of their outcomes in the current fiscal year. To date, 108 contracts have been received and all have been reviewed within 5 working days. In-service training has been provided for EMS, the Sheriff's Department, and supervisors. As of December 2008, \$112,761 has been turned over to Legal for collection, and \$69,441 has been collected, resulting in a 61.56% collection rate.

***Fiscal Year 2007/08***

Legal Services achieved all of its outcomes for Fiscal Year 2007/08 and exceeded 2. The department earned a 100% client satisfaction rating which was well above its goal of 95% approval to determine the success of legal services offered. Legal exceeded its standard of completing preparation and review of requested contracts within 5 days 95% of the time by reviewing all 551 contracts received during the year within 5 days. Legal action to collect delinquent accounts and other moneys owed to the County resulted in a 93% collection rate in excess of the 50% rate anticipated. An attorney also attended all meetings of the Board of Commissioners, Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, and Subdivision Review Boards to provide immediate legal assistance. Finally, legal staff delivered in-service training to the Sheriff's Department and Emergency Services and provided 24/7 on-call legal assistance to Public Safety agencies.